

Amendments to the Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method for forming a gate dielectric for an integrated circuit device, the method comprising:

forming an initial oxynitride layer upon a substrate material, said initial oxynitride layer having an initial thickness; and

subjecting said initial oxynitride layer to a plasma nitridation, said plasma nitridation resulting in final oxynitride layer, said final oxynitride layer having a final thickness,

wherein said final oxynitride layer has an equivalent oxide thickness of less than 15 angstroms and a nitrogen dosage concentration of at least 2.0×10^{15} atoms/cm².

2. (previously amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said final thickness exceeds said initial thickness by less than 5 angstroms.

3. (previously amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said final thickness is less than 20 angstroms.

6. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said initial oxynitride layer is formed upon said substrate by:

ionically implanting nitrogen atoms into said substrate; and

oxidizing said substrate, following said substrate being ionically implanted with nitrogen atoms.

7. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said initial oxynitride layer is formed upon said substrate by rapid thermal nitric oxide (NO) deposition.

8. (original) The method of claim 6, wherein said final oxynitride layer further has a reduction in effective electron mobility, μ_{eff} , of less than 20% from the effective electron mobility of said initial oxynitride layer.